R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 014 090 CG 000 586

A COUNSELING PROGRAM FOR SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED EVENING COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO LEAVE SCHOOL IN GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING. TECHNICAL REPORT.

BY- BERGER, LESLIE JOHNSON, KENNETH
CITY UNIV. OF NEW YORK, CITY COLL.

PUB DATE 15 DEC 66

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$1.60 38P.

DESCRIPTORS- *COUNSELING PROGRAMS, *DROPOUTS, *EVENING COUNSELING PROGRAMS, *COLLEGE STUDENTS, *CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED, DROPOUT CHARACTERISTICS, FOLLOWUP STUDIES, REPORTS

AN IN-DEPTH INVESTIGATION OF THE REASONS QUALIFIED LOW-INCOME STUDENTS IN THE EVENING DIVISION LEAVE SCHOOL WHILE IN GOOD STANDING WAS CONDUCTED. FULL DATA WAS OBTAINED ON ONLY 64 SUBJECTS WHO COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES AND WERE INTERVIEWED BY COUNSELORS. ACCORDING TO QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES, THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON FOR LEAVING WAS FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, THE PRINCIPAL FACTOR WAS CUMULATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL PRESSURE FROM HOME, FAMILY, AND PERSONAL PROBLEMS. ALMOST EVERY STUDENT VIEWED HIS DEPARTURE AS TEMPORARY AND AN OVERWHELMING NUMBER AFFIRMED THEY STILL INTENDED TO RETURN TO COLLEGE SOMEDAY. POSSIBLE REMEDIAL MEASURES, REVISIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDE MORE GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT FROM THE COLLEGE, AND ORIENTATION SEMINARS OR DISCUSSIONS TO REVIEW PROBLEMS AND COPING MECHANISMS. SINCE MOST DROPOUTS FEEL THAT THEY WILL RETURN TO COLLEGE, FOLLOWUP ACTIVITY MAY BE MEANINGFUL. IT IS SUGGESTED THAT A STUDY BE MADE DRAWING ON A POPULATION WHICH HAS DROPPED OUT MORE RECENTLY. ALTHOUGH THE DROPOUT IS ALWAYS CONCEIVED OF AS TEMPORARY, INSPECTION SHOWS THIS IS RARELY TRUE. A FOLLOWUP ACTIVITY COVERING THE PRESENT SAMPLE IS URGED. (WR)

OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED014090

TECHNICAL REPORT

Project Title: A COUNSELING PROGRAM FOR SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED EVENING COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO LEAVE SCHOOL IN GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING

under

U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Office of Education
Grant RF 196

December 15, 1966

Prepared by: Dr. Charles Bahn,
Project Supervisor,
Acting Director,
Office of Institutional Research
City College, CUNY

CG 000 586

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Miss Mary Cox of the Office of Institutional Research Services at The City College of New York deserves special thanks for her capable assistance in preparing the final report. Dr. Ari De-Levie and Dr. Herbert Lotz of the counseling staff were also helpful in suggesting aspects to be included in it.

Principal Investigators

Dr. Leslie Berger
Dr. Kenneth Johnson

Project Supervisor

Dr. Charles Bahn

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
I.	PURPOSE	
	A. Summary Statement of Purpose	1
	B. Rationale	1 & 2
	C. Staff Training and Selection	2 & 3
	D. Use to be Made of Findings	3
II.	ACTUAL PROCEDURES	
	A. The Sample	3 - 5
	B. Tracing	5
	C. Interview Procedure	5 & 6
	D. Staffing	6
	1. Counselors	6
	2. Graduate Assistants	6
	3. Student Aides	6
	4. Principal Investigators	7
III.	SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS	7 & 8
IV.	PROTOCOL DATA	
	A. Questionnaire Responses	8 & 9
	1. The College Decision	9
	2. The College Experience	9 & 10
	3. The Decision to Drop Out	10 & 11
	4. Values and Attitudes	11
	B. Interview Protocol Data	12
	1. Open-end Response Material	12
	2. Interview Ratings by Counselors	12 & 13
V.	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	
	A. The Sample	13
	B. The Pressures	13 - 15
	1. Possible Remedial Measures	15
	2. The Impact of Follow-up	16
	3. Replication	16 & 17
	4. Recommendations	17 & 18

APPENDIX A: Sample Questionnaire with Distribution of Responses
APPENDIX B: Sample Interview Protocol with Distribution of Responses
APPENDIX C: A "Case Study" -- The Case of L: A Troubled Dropout

I. PURPOSE

A. Summary Statement of Purpose.

This project was an investigation in depth of the reasons that qualified low income students in the Evening Division leave school while in good standing. Such an investigation, by virtue of the fact that it involved intensive interviewing by trained counselors, also created a counseling relationship within which these students could reappraise their decision concerning further higher education.

The investigation began with a review of the files of the Evening Division of The City College of New York for the years 1961-62. From these files, 250 folders were selected of students coming from low income backgrounds who did not continue their education after the successful completion of two or more college courses. The selected folders were those which also contained no later request for transcripts.

The students were contacted and invited to interviews with designated counselors. The counselors, especially trained for this purpose, explored in one or more depth interviews the student's reason for dropping out of college and possible remedial steps that might encourage him to return.

B. Rationale.

The City College of New York is located in the center of Harlem. Within the City College the preponderance of students from low socio-economic backgrounds (over 30% of the students are Negroes and Puerto Ricans) attend classes in the School of General Studies. Approximately one-third of the students enrolled in the School of General Studies are non-matriculants. Approximately 1,000 new non-matriculants enter each academic year. The vast majority of these attend the Evening Division with a view to matriculating for a baccalaureate degree. Their residence in the evening college is, in a true sense, a protracted admission process in which actual performance in college classes becomes the decisive factor which ultimately determines their eligibility for baccalaureate status.

In order to enroll as a non-matriculant, the student must present minimally a high school average of 75, or achieve a score of 300 on SCAT (School College Ability Test). A score of 300 on SCAT is approximately equal to the average on national college freshman norms.

Non-matriculants may re-register in the School of General Studies only if they achieve a minimal average of C during each year of attendance.

These admission and particularly stringent retention standards have increased the chances of success of non-matriculated registrants.

In analyzing data based upon students in the School of General Studies, it was found that 50% of non-matriculants leave school before completing 15 credits -- which is the equivalent of one year of study in the Evening Session. Moreover, more than one-half of these students leave college while in good academic standing. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that a large group of withdrawals is composed of scholastically qualified students who leave school for other than academic reasons.

While we had some educated guesses about the reasons for their leaving school, we lacked actual data. We believed that, among other things, some persons leave school because of financial reasons. Others leave because they cannot perceive themselves as able to succeed in school despite their good grades. Many of these students have grave uncertainties about their future opportunities to occupy positions of responsibility after a prolonged period of prerequisite schooling. They must deny themselves many immediate advantages over a long period of time for an objective which they have not seen tangibly realized by anyone they know.

Based upon the findings, this study was expected to suggest remedial programs that would facilitate the continuation of higher education for these persons. And, finally, this study, in utilizing counseling to collect its data, also provided a relationship between the student and the counselor in which the student can reassess his decision for a higher education. This investigation should help us to identify reasons why qualified, disadvantaged students who have demonstrated their capacity to do college level work, and therefore benefit from a college education, discontinue their efforts to receive such an education. These students represent a proven and sure pool of talent that is not being effectively enough utilized for their own benefit and for the benefit of the community.

C. Staff Training and Selection.

At the start of the study, an intensive workshop with the counseling psychologists was conducted. While persons chosen

for these positions were required to have experience in clinical or counseling psychology, it was essential for the staff to synchronize on the precise goals of the study, and to acquaint themselves with the facilities and resources of the college. It was also considered important that the counselors become sensitive not only to the advantages of a possible college education for those for whom it is realistic, but also to the potential harm when it becomes an unrealistic goal.

D. Use to be Made of Findings.

The effectiveness of the program were to be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. The proportion of selected students who are contacted.

2. The proportion of students who appear for interviews.

3. The counselors' ratings of the value of the information gained in the interview.

4. The number and rated value and feasibility of suggestions for remedial action that emerged from the interviews.

5. The number of students contacted who decide to continue their post-secondary education.

5. The number of remedial actions or programs that become instituted as part of the operating procedure of the Evening Division of the College.

7. The academic results of those students who choose to return to college will be assessed in a follow-up study.

II. ACTUAL PROCEDURES

A. The Sample.

Although we had expected to glean our sample of 250 students

from a pool of 500, during the first weeks of the project we learned a few contrary facts of life. Even in general, students who drop out of any college move, marry, join the Army, change their names, go to Europe, go "underground", and, in a thousand other ways, become difficult and sometimes impossible to locate. When the group comes, for the largest part, from disadvantaged backgrounds, these problems become even more acute. There is more moving, more new marriages, more broken marriages, and more residence with stepfathers, half-sisters, or more distant relatives. There is less stability, less forwarding of mail, less helpful concern and interest from neighbors and families. (In a few cases, anxious parents or wives actually concealed or destroyed our initial contact letter to the dropout.)

What all this added up to was that we quickly concluded that we would have to vastly enlarge our initial pool of dropouts if we were to interview more than a handful.

What transpired then was a winnowing process that proceeded as follows:

	Number	No. Lost
1. Initial contact letters mailed (to students who had dropped out in the years 1960-61 and 1961-62.)	1,075	
2. Second contact letter mailed to students whose initial letters were not returned as undeliverable.	600	475
3. Follow-up telephone calls made by counselors (to students whose first letters had not been returned and whose telephone numbers could be determined.)	360	240
4A. Appointments for interviews arranged.	270	
4B. Students indicated that they could not come for interview, but would be willing to complete questionnaire.	72	18
	(342)	

	Number	No. Lost
5A. Interviews with counselors; questionnaires and interview forms completed.	64*	
5B. Questionnaires completed and returned by mail with adequate data.	24	254
TOTALS:	88	987

*Tables in the Appendices are based on only these 64 subjects, for whom the full data collection procedure was completed.

B. Tracing.

The method that we had considered in locating our elusive subjects was intensive investigation and tracing with the cooperation of a local community agency. A pilot attempt was launched to locate ten subjects classified by the post office as "addressee unknown". After considerable effort, expense, and time, seven had not been located. Of the three who were contacted, one was in the Army in Vietnam, and two, after having been located and contacted, declined the invitation to cooperate in the study. It was decided that tracing would cost too much to produce very little and the effort was abandoned.

C. Interview Procedure.

To describe the interview process in detail, the interviews were held during evening hours and on Saturdays. The students were asked to report to the College on the half-hour. When they came to the office, they were greeted and asked to fill in the questionnaire, a task involving from 15 to 20 minutes of writing and reviewing educational and vocational perspectives.

Before the interview began, the counselor would review the student's transcript and scan the completed questionnaire.

The sessions began on the hour and were of at least 50 minutes duration in partial accord with therapeutic tradition

(often they were longer). Although the structure of the interviews was determined, in part, by the items on the interview form, the counselors were encouraged to allow the student to speak freely without limits. The counselor would conclude the interview with an invitation to return if it seemed appropriate or, more often, with a referral. After the student left, the counselor would spend a half-hour in filling in the interview form and making additional notes.

D. Staffing

1. The Counselors.

A significant strength of the project was the quality of counselors who participated. Each of the four counselors was a Ph. D. psychologist, with a minimum of five years experience in clinical and/or counseling activities. In addition, the counselors had been involved in other college programs, particularly in programs of social and personal orientation designed for evening students. They were, therefore, knowledgeable about vocational and academic problems of students and college regulations and procedures, as well as normal problems of college students.

2. Graduate Assistants.

The supervision of the clerical work, the preparation of forms, greeting of interviewees, and maintenance of the interview schedule were the responsibility of the graduate assistant.

3. Student Aides.

Much of the clerical work of the project was done by student aides. This included locating addresses and telephone numbers, addressing and mailing envelopes, inserting material in envelopes, checking responses, and other such tasks. The student aides chosen for this work were from a group of disadvantaged students participating in a pre-college summer orientation program. Considering our overall purposes, we identify the part-time employment and training of disadvantaged students as a valid, albeit minor, aspect of the project.

4. Principal Investigators.

Dr. Kenneth Johnson assumed primary responsibility for the preparation of questionnaire and interview protocols. Dr. Leslie Berger was in charge of the staffing, and system procedures. Dr. Berger and Dr. Bahn conducted the Staff Training and held regular meetings with staff members on progress and problems of the project.

III. SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The group that was interviewed represents a self-selected sample of those who were sufficiently motivated to return to the College on their own time to participate in the project. The only assurance given to them was that their cooperation would enable the College to better understand problems confronting students in the Evening Division.

The strength of their motivation reflects the probability of success of a major objective of the project -- encouraging students who have dropped out to return to school. It is, therefore, instructive to examine some of the salient characteristics of this sample with particular regard to ways in which they differ from the larger student population.

The sex distribution for the group was roughly two-thirds male, and one-third female. For the College as a whole, and for the class under study, the predominance of men is closer to three to one, so that we conclude that women are disproportionately represented in our sample; further, at this time, all but two of the women in our sample are employed.

Our group differs from a conventional evening school population in another significant way. Slightly more than half are now married, about a third are single, three students are divorced, three are separated, and one is widowed. Since the last three categories imply marriage, it appears that two-thirds of our students have been married.

The modal age for entrance to our College is, not a-typically, eighteen; the average variation is about two years in either direction. Our respondents have a much greater range of age at the time of entrance to College, despite a modal age of eighteen for them. About sixty percent of our

sample falls within the customary range of age sixteen to twenty-one for this variable, but the remaining forty percent were all older. Sixteen respondents were in the twenty-two to thirty age bracket; three were in the thirty-five to forty group, and onehearty soul began his studies at the age of forty-two.

This can be understood in terms of the fact that two-thirds of the group did not enter College immediately after high school. Most went to work for intervals ranging from one to twenty-four years. A sixth of the total group entered the military during this interval.

Although they tend to be an older group, three quarters of them were unmarried when they entered College. For the remaining quarter, not only were they married, but all were parents of children including one student who just got under the wire by reporting progeny "on the way" at that time.

Although most of our sample pursued a college preparatory academic course in high school, few did so because of parental example. Only thirteen students had parents who had attended college; of these, in only three cases it was both parents.

Almost all were gainfully employed during the time they attended City College, most having begun working <u>before</u> the age of seventeen.

With regard to family background, most came from homes in which only one parent was present. The most common reason was that one parent was deceased, although eight students reported that their parents were separated, and five that they were divorced.

The fathers' occupations, for the most part, were in the unskilled and semi-skilled categories. Parental residences for more than half the sample were in areas of the city designated as poverty areas.

IV. PROTOCOL DATA

A. Questionnaire Responses -- the Expressed Desire to Return

What follows is a summary narrative of the Questionnaire Responses (Appendix A) with some fleshing out based on interview data.

A striking fact is that the overwhelming majority of those who appeared for the interview affirmed that they still plan to return to college at a later date. Many, however, do not respond to the next question, as to when their return will take place. Others respond to this question in such a vague and indefinite way as to raise doubts about the reality of these plans.

1. The College Decision.

While in high school, they report, they were not friendly with their teachers, but all had at least a few friends who were considering going on to college. There is quite a range in response to the question of when they first thought of college. A sixthdates this goal from early childhood, a comparable group from elementary and junior high school, and a third from high school. The final third did not think seriously about college until after they had been graduated from high school and worked a while.

In the main, this interest was explored with parents who approved and encouraged it. For about a dozen students, however, there was no discussion with parents, and two say flatly that neither parent favored a college choice. One interesting response is that approval and encouragement is described as coming from "mother alone" as often as it is ascribed to "both parents". Once the decision to attend college was made, all parents approved the choice of City College.

For about seventy percent of our group, it was an absolute financial necessity that they work while attending college. Even for those who do not claim absolute necessity, most report they worked to have spending money, to help buy school materials, to buy clothing, or to help support parents.

The major reason cited for the decision to attend college was to prepare for a profession, although a large number cite the desire to improve themselves as people, or to get a liberal education.

2. The College Experience

Most of the students were able to register for the courses they wanted at the College, although thirty percent reported that they did not experience this good fortune.

A similar division occurs in the rating of the courses for stimulation, practical value, and extent of learning. Seventy percent considered their courses strong in these areas, but the minority considered the courses "not stimulating", or "boring", "not of much value", or even "a waste of time", and felt that they learned "little or nothing". A response area that may be closely related deals with the difficulty of the courses. The modal response here was "moderately difficult", with the second most popular response, "not very difficult".

The professors were seen as fairly liberal, stimulating and intelligent. They were described as extremely knowledgeable, moderately detached and tending toward flexibility rather than rigidity, toward friendliness and warmth.

Only a handful of students became personally friendly, however, with one of their professors at the College. Despite this, most left the College feeling that it was a good College for them. Perhaps this is because the students also report meeting with professors occasionally to discuss their academic progress.

While at College, most of the students were living at home either with parents or family. Some admit living off campus in their own apartments.

They explain their choice of City College in terms of low cost, chance to work and study, academic standing and reputation, and convenient location in that order. They found a good deal of competition for grades, and many claimed that they either enjoyed the competition or had neutral feelings about it.

About a third of the group felt at home at the College at once, but an equal percentage claim retrospectively that they never felt at home, never belonged at City College. It is about this percentage that reports seeking the services of the Counseling Division for help with academic, vocational or personal problems. This is a much larger percent than is true for the general student body.

3. The Decision to Drop Out

The decision to leave the College was, for most, a lonely and tentative decision. They report that they did not

discuss it with any College official or instructor. Many did not even discuss it with any one at home.

At the time they withdrew, most planned to resume later at City College or to transfer to another college.

When asked to categorize their reasons for leaving, they cite (in order of frequency) financial problems, academic problems, difficulty in concentrating, and lack of interest in course work and studying. The latter two reasons were most often cited by students of high academic grade achievement.

The most common pattern was to accept employment without further training after leaving. Many, who had demanding full time jobs already, simply dropped the demands of college and had the evenings to themselves.

4. Value and Attitudes

The clearest enunciation of the educational values of this group is given in response to an item asking that they rank order several listed purposes of college education. The two top ranked items are: "provide a basic general education and appreciation of ideas", and just behind in rank order, "provide vocational training and skill".

In a similar ranking of life satisfactions, the choices are (in order) "home and family", "career and occupation", and in much lesser degree, "the arts, music and literature". Job satisfactions, described by ranking, lie primarily in providing an opportunity to use special abilities and aptitudes.

Aspirations for this group are very high. For most, it is "very important" to get ahead in life. They expect their standard of living to be "much higher" than that of their parents. This may be related to the fact that most of them read either "quite a lot" or "fairly frequently".

Yet, in contrast to these aspirations is one descriptive reality: both the modal and mean annual income for this group are in the $5,000 to $7,500 range. Eight of them earn less than $3,000, and seventeen more are below a $5,000 annual income level.

B. Interview Protocol Data

1. Open-end Response Material

At the conclusion of the interview, the student was asked to summarize by responding to open-end questions about College experience. The responses were much more open than those that appeared on the questionnaire.

The greatest satisfactions of the College experience included "getting A's", "anticipation of a degree from City College", "working in a professional school -- no playing around", and "to be around people who can and do think".

Dissatisfaction arose from running between two campuses, parking problems, too many required courses, no time to socialize, and psychological discrimination against evening students.

2. Interview Ratings by Counselors

The most striking rating of this sample is its "vocationalism". That is, the modal student is assigned by the counselors the highest possible rating for "emphasized value of learning for utilitarian purpose -- 'practical' usefulness". This rating contrasts sharply with the modal ratings for four other characteristics, namely the lowest possible rating for each:

a) interest in learning for its own sake
b) interest in meeting the "right people"
c) interest in developing friendships and participating in social activities
d) "duty"or "cause" orientation toward education

With regard to personality, the counselors describe most of these students as presenting themselves well, with average anxiety level, balanced control, strong independence, and average ethnocentrism, realism and flexibility.

They rank the decision to leave College for the majority as adaptive behavior, although for about a third they see the decision as either impulsive, immature behavior, or downright self-destructive behavior.

They see evidence that, since leaving college, almost all of the students are making at least an adequate social and vocational adjustment.

For two-thirds, they recommend return to college with appropriate referral and guidance.

In most cases, the basis of such a decision seems sufficiently clear-cut so that the counselors do not feel that additional diagnostic counseling sessions are necessary.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

A. The Sample

The term "dropout" covers a wide range of people who discontinue their educational efforts. The sample studied in this project are college dropouts who have demonstrated their capacity to do college level work. This implies not only intellectual capability, but also positive attitudes and motivations often lacking in other dropout groups.

Nevertheless, these youngsters did "drop out", which in most cases meant a termination of higher education and a thwarting of potential.

B. The Pressures

Why do capable students drop out of college? The principal reason given at the time of drop out is financial pressure. Yet, in the interview situation, it becomes clear that in some cases, the financial situation is really adequate and, in most others, though finances constitute a problem, it is a perpetual problem that the student has coped with through previous semesters. While it is possible that cumulative pressures can mount up until they become too much to bear, this does not usually seem to be the case. Rather, it appears to be more socially acceptable to claim financial problems than to admit to personal or social difficulties.

The counselors reported, therefore, that there were major discrepancies between the questionnaire comments and what they discovered in the interviews.

The students cited finances and "inability to concentrate" as the major reasons for leaving College. The counselors found that the principal factor is environmental pressures from home, family and personal problems. For example, one girl who earned A's in math and physics, dropped out after her fifth miscarriage. We must remember, too, that many of the respondents were quite a bit older than the average college student, and as time wore on, motivation waned and family responsibilities increased.

What stands out is that the counselors considered the dropout decision as adaptive behavior based on meaningful decision making in more than half of the cases. In the same proportion, they felt that the decision was part of a consistent rational pattern of behavior moving the individual toward social and economic independence. Nevertheless, they recommend that almost two-thirds of the group should return to college.

Putting it simply, the combined social pressures of disadvantaged backgrounds, pressures of slum life, of broken marriages, of illness and disease, of constant economic pressure, of part time and full time jobs, of complex family responsibilities, -- caused these individuals to "give up" and find a more immediate way to cope with life's pressures. This often involved getting a job, getting a better job, or in a few cases, adding a part time job to a full time one.

These students made use of counseling while at College, but the customary guidance procedures were not adequate for them. Our counselors' finding that their return to College is advisable means that with the financial and counseling support now available, these students could once again aspire to complete their college education.

In proper perspective, it is clear that the most significant fact is the one that we started with -- namely, that many students in <u>good academic standing</u> drop out of college because of external pressures. At a time when millions of dollars are being spent to motivate and train disadvantaged minorities, such a loss of capable individuals is most serious.

The lack of parental support, both financial and academic, blights motivation at an early stage, usually during high school. The typical student of our group then goes to work before he completes high school and does not actively consider college. It is the easiest choice, and can be explained by financial necessity. After some years in the world of work, the student realizes how he has blighted his hopes for the future by his curtailment of education, and how he has squandered his talents and capacities. Older now, with family obligations already begun or at hand, he enters college and tries to move ahead. For the disadvantaged particularly, though, he does not really feel that he belongs. A host of pressures, stemming from proverty, from prejudice, and their consequences, beset him as he proceeds. He wonders whether it is all worthwhile. Finally, for many, the pressure becomes too great and a "temporary" decision to leave is made.

1. Possible Remedial Measures

What could be done to prevent this tragic pattern? For one thing, buttressing of motivation on the high school level might help these individuals to make their college decisions at an early time, when the external pressures are not so severe. This augmentation will not come from parents or family, but our data indicate that it can come from friends. If the school or community were to organize group counseling or guidance activities focused on the mutual sharing of support and encouragement by aspiring high school youth, these might provide the added measure of needed strength.

What is also obvious is that the College, having accepted the student, has to provide a higher level of guidance and support than it now provides. The initiative for counseling must come from the College. The students should know that they can receive assistance in dealing with family, financial, and social problems, as well as academic and personal problems.

One conservative possibility would be scheduling orientation seminars or discussions for married evening students with children to meet and review problems and coping mechanisms. Often, these students feel that they "do not belong". Recognition of their numbers and special problems might make them feel less like "outsiders", and enable them to cope more effectively.

2. The Impact of Follow-up

Since most capable dropouts believe, with varying degrees of realism, that they will someday return to college, follow-up activity can be very meaningful for them. All of the counselors reported responses of gratitude and appreciation for our effort. The idea that a large "parent" organization such as City College would show such interest in them was flattering. One student, in the service in Vietnam, wrote, "You can't imagine what it means to me to know that back there someone remembers that I left college and cares about what happened to me. When I get back, if I do, I'll be glad to come for an interview." Some students were more guarded. "How come you want me?", was the first response. Later, they too felt that they had been offered an unequaled chance to voice their complaints and problems.

One girl commented, "Now that I'm separated from my husband and have a child to support, I have to work -- and college is out. I hope that you can help some others not to make my mistakes."

A third of those interviewed worked out specific and detailed plans to return, and our current information is that most of this group has, in fact, filed applications for re-admission.

Not a week passes without a letter or call from some student, contacted months ago, who has thought it over and now wants to come in for an interview and discuss possible re-admission.

3. Replication

The prospects and problems of interviewing college students have not been the subject for a systematic, research oriented review. This is regrettable, for these students represent an increasing proportion of the swelling ranks of the college student population of our country. Particularly in the large urban centers where poverty and discrimination pose additional problems, the Evening College or School of General Studies must play an increasingly crucial role.

We would suggest the following revisions or variations in the designing approach both in any replication of our project, and in renewed activities within our College. First,

we would recommend that the sample that is contacted be drawn from a population that has dropped from school more recently than ours. The fact that we had a four or five year gap in most cases, between the dropout and our attempted contact, made the likelihood of contact smaller. Our premise was that the gap would insure our contacting only those who had in fact dropped out, and not merely temporarily interrupted their college work. This now appears less significant that we had imagined. The data from our sample indicate that the dropout is almost always conceived of as temporary, but inspection of our files shows that this is rarely true.

We would also recommend that as a technical matter of tracing, every effort be made to obtain social security numbers of students to be contacted. Having such numbers makes it much easier to locate people who have moved.

Finally, a lesson of our experience is that one must begin with a large sample if the intention is to contact and counsel an appreciable number of students.

Within our own setting, we recommend that the activity of this project be continued with two principal thrusts. The first would involve a follow-up activity covering the present sample of students. This follow-up would help us to determine the extent to which the counselors' recommendations were followed as an indication of the effectiveness of the counseling procedure. One dimension that might be explored would be the contrast between the development of those who have announced a decision to return as against those who did not make such a decision. It also seems vital to carry out this activity with new crops of more recent vintage as outlined above. If we begin with a larger and more recent sample, the likelihood is that we can meet with and encourage the return of many more students.

4. Recommendations

We, therefore, recommend the continuation of this kind of project as an ongoing talent search activity. If we are to search, why should it not be where the talent of demonstrated competence is readily available, and only one step removed from healthy development?

Our experience has given us respect for the enormous complexity and difficulty of the task of locating and contacting these students. This knowledge should enhance the future effectiveness of similar activity.

The talented students who could be assisted to return to college, making use of the various forms of financial and guidance assistance, would constitute an asset both to their communities and to the country.

APPENDIX A: sameple questionnaire with distribution of responses (where feasible)

Research Project, 1966 The City College

Questionnaire

_____ Sex: 43 male
(Name: Last, First, Middle). 21 female

(Address: Street, City, State).

Marital Status: Single 24 if so when _____

Married 33 if so when _____

Divorced 3 if so when _____

Separated 3 if so when _____

Widowed 1 if so when _____.

This questionnaire is designed to provide our research staff with vital information regarding the reasons students leave college without acquiring a degree. Your cooperation in this research program will enable the college to better understand problems confronting students in the evening division. The focus of the study is upon those problems that prompt a student to give up or postpone his education even though he has demonstrated his ability to do college work.

Please answer all the questions by checking one of the categories provided unless otherwise indicated.

1. Do you still plan to return to college at a later date?
   Yes 53 No 6 When? _____

2. Did you pursue a college-preparatory, academic course in the high school? Yes 44 No 18.

3. What courses in high school did you enjoy most?
   _____ Art and Music
   _____ English and Literature
   _____ History and Social Studies
   _____ Mathematics
   _____ Science: Biology, Chemistry, Physics.
   _____ Vocational subjects: Agriculture, business, typing, Shop, Shorthand.
   _____ Other (Please indicate)

4. Were you personally friendly with any of your teachers in high school? (Friendly enough to talk with about matters not at all related to school or course work?) Yes 23 No 40.
If Yes, with how many were you personally friendly? 1-7 (number)

5. When did you first think about going to college?
Early childhood 11
Elementary School 4
Junior High School 6
High School 22
After graduation and after having worked a while 21

6. How many of your friends in high school planned to go to college?
Many 38
A few 19
1 or 2 3
None 3

6a. Were any of these persons those whom you considered close friends?
Yes 50 No 13

7. Did either of your parents attend College? Mother 8 Yes 56 No Father 10 Yes 54 No.

8. What is (was) the vocation of your parents?
Mother _____ (specify)
Father _____ (specify).

9. Did your parents ever discuss with you the possibility of going to college?
Mother: Favored it 47 Did not favor it 7
Father: Favored it 31 Did not favor it 23.

10. How did your parents feel about your choice of the City College once you decided upon it?
Strongly approved it 36
Mildly approved it 19
Mildly disapproved it 1
Strongly disapproved it 0

11. If your parents had different opinions about your attendance at college, please indicate what those opinions were:

_____

_____

_____

12. Did you enter college immediately after high school?
26 Yes
42 No
If no, what did you do after high school?
11 Enter the military
25 Took a job
0 Enter a training program and worked
6 Other: specify _____

12a. How old were you when you entered college? 16 - 42

13. If you worked between finishing high school and entering college, how long did you work? Indicate months or years 3 mos. - 24 yrs.

14. What sort of job did you have? _____

_____.

15. When were you first gainfully employed?(do not indicate jobs done for parents unless your parents were in business and you were gainfully employed by them.).
2 5-10 years of age
14 10-15 years of age
29 16-18 years of age
17 After 18.

16. What were some of the job(s) you had during junior high and/or high school? List. _____ _____
_____ _____

17. Were you gainfully employed during the time you attended City College?
Yes 55 No 8.
If yes, what sort of position did you hold? _____

_____

18. How many hours/week did you work while attending City College?
20 hours/week or less 5
30 hours a week 6
40 hours a week 29
More than 40 hours/week 15.

19. Was it an absolute financial necessity that you work while attending College? Yes 44 No 12
If no, why did you work? Spending money 4 Clothes money 2
School supplies 2 Aid with support 1
Liked my job and wanted to work 4.

20. Did you change your job during the time you were attending City College?
Yes 12 No 37.
If yes, did your new job coincide with your decision not to continue?
5 Yes, it did.
11 No, it did not.

20a. WERE YOU MARRIED AT THE TIME YOU ENTERED COLLEGE?
13 Yes 48 No.

20b. If yes, did you have any children? 13 Yes 0 No.
If yes, how many? 1 - 5 (give number)

21. As you think back upon it, what were the major reasons for you decision to attend college?
8 To gain job advancement
39 To prepare for a profession
17 To get a liberal education
31 To improve yourself as a person
4 Other:specify_____

22. When you registered at the College, were you able to get the courses you wanted? Yes 45 No 18.
If no, what would you have preferred to study instead of the courses you registered for?(Specify)_____

23. What were your impression of your courses? How stimulating were they?
23 Very stimulating
23 Moderately stimulating
8 Not very stimulating
7 Boring.

24. How would you rate your courses in terms of "practical" value to you?
18 Extremely valuable
23 Moderately valuable
15 Not much value
3 A waste of time.

25. How much do you feel you learned from the courses you took?
26 A great deal
20 A moderate amount
9 Not much
5 Little or nothing.

26. How would you rate the level of difficulty of the courses you took?
1 Extremely difficult
34 Moderately difficult
23 Not very difficult
2 Extremely easy.

27. Which one of the following adjectives do you think best describe the professors you had? (Check degree you feel is appropriate)

Authoritarian	4	2	11	11	8	Liberal
Boring	4	3	14	17	12	Stimulating
Intelligent	29	7	3	0	0	Stupid
Knowledgeable	26	9	2	0	4	Ill prepared
Involved	6	5	12	5	6	Detached
Flexible	2	9	14	2	6	Rigid
Progressive	3	9	11	4	5	Conservative
Friendly	15	20	10	0	1	Unfriendly
Practical	19	13	7	2	2	Impractical
Positive	6	15	7	2	1	Negative
Warm	4	9	11	5	3	Cold

28. Did you become personally friendly with any of the professors at the City College? Yes 6 No 56.
If yes, how many? 1.

29. In general, how did you feel about the College after you had attended it?
38 It was a good college for me.
12 It was a fairly good college for me.
7 It was the wrong college for me.

30. Which of the following factors had the greatest bearing on your decision to leave the College?
15 Academic difficulties
20 Financial problems
3 Lack of interest in coursework and studying
15 Difficulty in concentrating
2 Dislike of your professors
22 Other? Specify. _____

31. What proportion of the faculty members did you find were really interested in students and their problems?
21 Almost all
17 Some
12 Very few
7 about that I encountered

32. What is your judgment of the faculty members you studied with?
30 They were competent
15 They were fairly competent
7 They were about average
0 They were incompetent on the whole

33. During your attendance at the College how many times did you meet with professors to discuss academic progress?
1 Many
10 Several
13 Occasionally
11 Rarely
24 Never.

34. When you decided to leave the college did you discuss it with any professor or any other persons? Yes 10 No 51.
If yes, with whom did you discuss it?
52 Professor(s)
5 Counselor(s)
2 Dean(s)
0 The registrar
1 A clerk in the registrar's office

35. What did you immediately do after leaving college?
4 Entered a training program, not in college (in business or industry)
9 Transferred to another college
[illegible] Entered the military
21 Accepted employment without further training
22 Other: specify _____

36. If you transferred to another college or have attended one since leaving City College, how much college work have you completed to date?
8 Freshman year(about 30 credits)
3 Sophomore year(about 60 credits)
0 Junior Year(about 90 credits)
3 Senior Year(about 120 credits)
0 Beyond the baccalaureate degree (more than 120 credits).

37. If you did not transfer to another college, have you considered returning to college? Yes 46 No 44.

38. Are you employed at present? Yes 60 No 2
If employed, are you working: full time 54, parttime 2.
What type of work are you doing? _____

_____
What is your weekly salary? _____.

38. While you were at college, were you?
37 Living at home with parents?
13 Living with family or relatives?
8 Living off campus in own apartment either alone or with friends?

39. While you were in College, did you have occasion to seek the services of the Division of Counseling and Testing?
Yes 18 No 43
If yes, for what reason did you seek counseling services?
7 Academic difficulties
1 Financial problems
1 Personal problems
6 Vocational problems or advice
2 Other: specify _____.

40. Why did you choose to attend evening session? _____
_____

41. What were the two most important reasons for your decision to come to City College? Rank the reasons in order of their importance to you. 1-most important; 2-next in importance;

29 low cost, chance to work and study
15 academic standing and reputation
13 convenience or location
0 family tradition(father or mother had attended City College)
7 better job after graduation
1 friends attended CCNY
3 Other:specify_____

42. College students have different ideas about the main purpose of college education. As you read the list below, consider what educational goals are most important to you. Rank the two most important to you by writing 1 - for the most important; and 2- for the next one in importance.

27 provided vocational training and skill
4 develop skills in interpersonal relationships(getting along with different kinds of people)
33 provided a basic general education and appreciation of ideas
4 develop knowledge and interest in community and world problems
1 help to develop moral capacities, ethical standards and ideals
0 prepare for a happy marriage and family life.

43. At the time you attended City College, did you have a major field of interest? Yes 46 No 15.
If yes, how definite was this interest? Very definite 29
Moderately definite 12
Not definite 3.

44. At the time you withdrew from the college, did you plan to return here or to continue your education at some other college?

30 To return to CCNY
16 To transfer to another college
12 I did not plan to continue at CCNY or elsewhere.

45. What was your vocational goal or objective while you were attending CCNY? Specify:_____
_____.

46. In discussing their "ideal" job or profession, students often indicate that certain requirements would have to be met. As you read the following list, think to what extent a job or profession would have to fulfill these requirements before you would consider it "ideal". Enter 1 before the one you consider most important and 2 before the second in importance.

2 Provide me with a change to earn a lot of money
12 Permit me to be creative or original
32 Provide me an opportunity to use my special abilities and aptitudes
6 Give me an opportunity to work with people
6 Provide social and economic security
6 Give me a chance to help or serve others.

47. From what activities do you expect to derive the most satisfaction in life?

14 The arts-music and literature
22 Career or occupation
32 Home and family
3 Recreation
2 Religious activities
3 Community activities
4 National or international betterment

48. How do you expect your standard of living (amount of income) to compare with that of your parents? (either present or past). I expect my standard of living to be:

43 Much higher
15 A little higher
4 About the same
0 A little lower
0 Much lower.

49. How important is it to you to get ahead in life?

37 Very important
21 Fairly important
3 I am indifferent to it
1 Not very important
0 Very unimportant

50. If you could have a choice in the matter, what kind of firm, organization or situation would you like best to work in?

11 Own business
0 Family business
5 Own professional office
18 Social service agency
10 Educational institution
5 Government service(Federal,State,City)
0 Military
12 Large industrial or business firm
3 Other:specify _____.

51. How much serious reading do you do?

25 Quite a lot
22 I read occasionally
15 I don't have a chance to do much serious reading

52. What was your income last year?

8 Less than $3000.00
17 $3000-$5000.00
21 $5000-$7,500.00
13 $7.500-$10,000
1 $10,000-$20,000
0 Above $20,000.

53. Are your parents: Living together? 27 Separated? 8 year? _____
Divorced? 5 One or both deceased? 26.

54. How many brothers and sisters do you have? _____brothers _____sisters

55. Did any of your brothers or sisters ever attend college or are they in college now? Yes_____ No_____.

56. If yes, how many of each? Brothers_____ Sisters_____.

57. How much formal education did your mother and father have?

Father		Mother
17	Grade school through grade 6	14
8	J.H.S. through grade 9	10
21	Senior H.S. through grade 12	24
1	College - two years of less	3
6	College - obtained a degree	0
2	Finished graduate or professional school?	4

58. If either or both of your parents attended college, what colleges did they attend? Mother_____ Father_____

59. How many friends did you make among the students at CCNY?
7 A wide circle
12 A few close friends
36 Acquaintances
10 None at all

60. How did you feel about competing with the other students when you were a CCNY?
8 I did not like competition
28 I have neutral feelings about competition
25 I enjoy competition

61. How much competition did you find for grades at CCNY?
18 A great deal
21 A moderate amount
9 Very little
7 I found no competition at all

62. How did you feel you "fitted" in at CCNY?
26 I felt at home at once
13 It took me quite a while before I felt at home
16 I never felt at home or that I belonged at City College.

APPENDIX B: sample interview protocol with distribution of responses (where feasible); see pg. 5 of this appendix for partial summary of responses on Interview.

SUMMER PROJECT: 1966

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. What were the faculty at City College like?

2. What were the students like at City College?

3. What provided your greatest satisfaction?

4. What caused your greatest dissatisfaction?

5. What are your present life goals?

INTERVIEWER RATING OF STUDENTS:

(Rate each on 1-5 scale; 1 lowest to 5 highest)

6. ____ Scholarly values & interests: as, interest in "learning for its own sake.

7. ____ Vocationalism: as, emphasis on value of learning for utilitarian purpose or "practical" usefulness.

8. ____ Social status needs: as, interest in meeting "the right people, making contacts" in order to ascend the social scale.

9. ____ Sociability: as, interest in developing friendships and participating in social activities. The "joining" characteristic.

10. ____ Duty or cause orientation (regardless of whether based upon what society expects or requires, family, religious, or ethical reasons) toward education.

This rating scale is "general" in that its goal is to quantify the impressions of the counselor, but these impressions are across the entire data plane."

RATING OF THE INDIVIDUAL BY THE COUNSELOR

11._____General impression of the manner in which the individual presents himself. Enter:
(1) Undesirable: unpleasant, unfriendly, socially insensitive, etc.
(2) Average: no imbalance between desirable and undesirable traits.
(3) Desirable: pleasant, attractive, friendly, socially sensitive, handles self well in the interview situation.

12._____Anxiety level
(1) great manifest anxiety; (2) average; (3) very little evident.

13._____Impulsivity
(1) great: lacking in control; (2) balanced control; (3) little impulsivity: relaxed and controlled.

14._____Ethnocentrism
(1) great; (2) average; (3) little in evidence.

15._____Independence
(1) great; (2) average; (3) generally a dependent person.

16._____Realism
(1) pronounced realism; (2) average; (3) basically unrealistic.

17._____Flexibility (adaptability)
(1) very flexible; (2) average; (3) rigid.

18. Students generally give one or more of the following reasons for leaving college. Indicate which of the following apply to the person you have interviewed: (check)

21 Found college too difficult intellectually

29 Environmental pressures, particularly parental pressures to leave college and go to work

13 Lacked specific goal orientation (could see no reason to go to college)

12 Lacked motivation

9 Did not need college for vocational goal

3 Inability to perceive self as a "college man"

19. A student's decision to leave college may be indicative of many things. As you assess the reasons the individual has given for his decision and as you weigh the other pertinent factors, such as what he has done since leaving, indicate whether you think his decision was:

37 Adaptive behavior based on meaningful decision-making

21 Impulsive behavior evidencing immaturity and lack of self-control

5 Self destructive behavior supported by other evidences of self-defeating mechanisms

0 "Acting out" behavior, such as is found among children and adolescents who wish to punish their parents, etc.

Since leaving college, has the student given evidence of:

20. VOCATIONAL ADJUSTMENT

21 maximal

40 adequate (moderate)

2 inadequate

21. SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

8 maximal

46 adequate (moderate)

7 inadequate

22. In your opinion, can you observe a consistent rational pattern of behavior on the part of the individual toward social and economic independence? (describe any pattern observed)

Definite Yes 37

No 9

23. In your opinion, would you recommend that the individual return to college?

44 Yes

17 No

Elaborate: _____

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNSELOR:

_____ Counselee should be scheduled for additional counseling because:

_____ Counselee should be referred to:

- 0 psychiatrist
- 3 psychologist
- 0 medical doctor
- 0 social worker
- 0 public agency
- _____ other: (specify) _____

Record specific referral made: _____

SUMMARY OF SPECIFIC REFERRALS (first referral only for given student)

Number Students	Office	Reason for Referral
11	Curriculum Advisement	Choice of courses, level of course
7	Admission Office	Procedures, regulations
5	Counseling & Testing	Vocational and/or emotional guidance
4	Therapy (possibility or specific referral)	Emotional Problems
3	CCNY dept. or school other than student's previous one	Exploration of Educational Objectives
3	College other than CCNY	
2	Suggested reapplication to CCNY after some time	Some question of ability
1	VA Office	Financial Assistance
1	Additional session	Student's request

Partial summary of responses from Interview Protocol

1. What were the faculty at City College like?
   The faculty gene rally were considered "good;" however, many felt "psychological discrimination" in attitude and teaching in evening session.

2. What were the students like at City College?
   Students were, in general, rated "O K," yet the majority felt that a lack of contact outside classroom (and small degree of socialization) made them appear cold and competitive.

3. What provided your greatest satisfaction?
   Most said they found greatest satisfaction in learning (e.g., course content); many noted "no tuition" as a source of satisfaction.

4. What caused your greatest dissatisfaction?
   The source of greatest dissatisfaction for these students was their personal inability to keep going; other causes of dissatisfaction were the hectic registration process, pressures, and lack of social life of evening students.

5. What are your present life goals?
   The great majority wanted to keep and move ahead in their present jobs, and still continue to "get an education;" several noted specific goals that actually require a college degree.

INTERVIEWER RATING OF STUDENTS:

	LOWEST 1	2	3	4	HIGHEST 5
6. Scholarly values & interests	24	9	7	10	14
7. Vocationalism	5	10	8	10	31
8. Social status needs	33	11	10	8	2
9. Sociability	37	9	7	7	4
10. "Duty" or "cause" orientation	38	4	10	4	8
11. General impression	2 (lowest)	37	34 highest)		
12. Anxiety level	21	34	9		
13. Impulsivity	25	32	7		
14. Ethnocentrism	14	30	15		
15. Independence	11	21	32		
16. Realism	10	31	23		
17. Flexibility	4	55	4		

(In working with individual students, one must be careful not to depend on massed data alone for information. Consequently, we have included, as a separate Appendix, a narrative description of the situation of one student. This student was chosen not because he is typical, but because he represents an extreme case within which we encounter many of the problems found in interviewing a large group of students.)

THE CASE OF L.: A TROUBLED DROPOUT

The picture of L. that emerges from the data in his questionnaire and counselor interview shows many contradictions in his personal outlook. He is one of four in his family; at present, his parents are separated. L. gives us the impression that he shuns contact with others. His parents, both high school graduates, never offered advice in career planning or college, and L. was reluctant to approach them. He neither made friends in school nor consulted faculty members for help with his curriculum problems. He found most professors to be authoritarian and conservative; he was never comfortable in the college atmosphere. L. rated his courses as boring, and claimed that they were "wastes" because he felt he could not apply anything that he had been taught.

L. believes that the goal of education is to be able to get along well with people (something he lacks), and to be skilled in a particular field.

He feels that it is very important to get "ahead", yet he admits that he expects only a little higher income than his father, who is a Civil Service employee. In high school, he was interested in the sciences, and had hoped to be connected with "Engineering Science". He is now married and works currently as a photo-copying machine technician. L. believes that an "ideal job" is one that provides social and economic security, but he earned less than $3,000 last year. He would like to derive his greatest satisfaction from his job. If he had his choice, he would manage his own business.

During his interview, L. gave the impression of one who emphasizes the value of learning only for "practical" usefulness. He did not express interest in increasing his status or meeting more people. L. presented himself

in an unfriendly manner to his interviewer and demonstrated social insensitivity. He gave the impression of extreme ethnocentrism, but was not considered overly anxious or impulsive. He demonstrated average independence, and an average amount of realism and adaptability.

L. decided to leave college because he anticipated academic difficulties ahead, and because he felt he did not need it. He chose, rather, to pursue a specific job training course.

Although the interviewer found that L. is currently making an adequate social and vocational adjustment, he recommends L. return to college. Upon return, he would need extensive guidance with regard to courses and objectives.

PROJECT SUPERVISOR: Dr. Charles Bahn
INSTITUTION: The City College of New York

Duration of Proposed Activity: 3 Months
Beginning Date: June 15, 1966
Ending Date: September 15, 1966

	FEDERAL FUNDS REQUESTED	FEDERAL FUNDS EXPENDED (approximate*)
A. DIRECT COSTS		*Although the project is completed, the books are still open to process final report and other costs.
1. Personnel		
Project Supervisor	$ 1,500	$ 1,500
Principal Investigator	1,500	1,500
Principal Investigator	1,500	1,500
Educational Counselors	6,500	2,950
Clerical Assistants & Student Aides	2,500	2,500
Consultants	665	565
	$14,165	$10,515
II. Employee Benefits	610	450
III. Travel	300	140
IV. Supplies and Materials **	700	200
V. Communications	100	75
VI. Services & Final Report Cost	300	300
VII. Other Direct Costs	500	100
VIII. Subtotal -- Direct Costs	$16,675	$11,780
B. INDIRECT COSTS		
All equipment used (typewriters, test forms, tape recorders, etc.) and services used (mimeographing, photostating, etc.) will come from college facilities).	5,000	3,500
C. TOTAL COSTS	$21,675	$15,280

**It was considered advisable to draw most supplies and equipment from the college.

UNEXPENDED $ 6,395

END

DEPT. OF HEALTH EDUCATION AND WELFARE

U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION

ERIC

DATE FILMED

4-17-68